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coffee corner quarterly

Staying in touch with our freelance professionals

“When you are joyful, when you say yes to life and have fun and project positivity all around you, you become a sun in the centre of every constellation, and people want to be near you.”

~ Shannon L Alder

which wolf will you feed today?

With all the turmoil we South Africans encounter daily—corruption, recession, social unrest, greed, drought, poverty, loss and man’s inhumanity to man—it’s no surprise to find ourselves lost in depression, anger, despair. Yet through all of this the world keeps turning, the sun rises every day, and we have so much to still be thankful for. And isn’t it interesting how those who’ve learnt the art of being positive often seem to attract more for which to be thankful?

Bruce Lee once said “as you think, so shall you become”. Most of us are so occupied with responding to our surroundings that we pay scant attention to where we’re investing our emotional energy. And even if we do, I wonder to what extent we really understand the extent of the damage negative thinking can inflict on the thinker.

A Cherokee legend goes something like this: an old man is teaching a child about life. “Each of us has a fight going on inside us”, he says. “A deadly fight between two wolves. One is evil, he is anger, resentment, regret, greed, self-pity, lies, false pride and ego. The other is good; he is joy, love, patience, hope, serenity, kindness, compassion, humility, benevolence.”

The child thinks for a minute, then asks, “But which one will win?” To which the old man replies, “The one you feed.”

To be present in the moment, however, is not easy. More difficult still is to focus on the positive aspects of our lives, to remember to genuinely appreciate these, and to live in the certainty that, no matter all the challenges faced, there will always be more to be thankful for.

Victor Frankl, holocaust survivor and subsequent author of “Man’s Search for Meaning”, spoke of how—even in the worst circumstance—hope remains. He counsels not only that, when everything is taken from us, we still retain the ‘last of the human freedoms’: our choice of attitude, but more importantly that this choice can yet lead to greater things. “When we are no longer able to change a situation, we are challenged to change ourselves.” And so to find new meaning.

We’re fed so much negativity from every angle, every day, that it would be easy to allow ourselves to be drowned in it. And we find so many others voicing—and hence magnifying—their negativity. Yet there are still so many making a positive difference,



focusing on something good, maintaining the courage of their convictions, living their ideals, giving to and loving others generously every day. Or getting up after being knocked down and not judging these events as losses, but finding a reason for optimism in what at a glance seems like defeat.

In the context of work and our contractors, we know that many are encountering difficult and challenging circumstances right now. As are we, in our own way. But, as spring returns again, we encourage you to look for and take conscious note of your own reasons to be joyful, many of which are probably hiding in plain sight.



Happy happy to all of you who celebrated the passing of another year this past quarter! We hope you were spoilt rotten ("thank you... next!") and celebrated your special day in style. Wishing you all the best for the coming year.

- July** Hilde Cronje, Janus Groenewald, Nick Milicevic
- August** Richard Kagaba, Mondli Magwaza
- September** Cornel Fourie, Anso Goncalves, Rob Hawken, Jules McCool, Pieter Pretorius



We bid farewell to Unathi Mahlangu, who has been with us for almost 3 years, and was a great ambassador of our values. Unathi has decided to move to easier pastures, working closer to home, and we wish her well.



But that's not all, folks. In the same breath, we'd like to welcome

Lindy Bootha, who has up to now represented our sister company, Knowledge:Worx, but who has stepped into the breach to take up the reins from Unathi, as well as looking after some of our newer clients. With the strong relationships Lindy has built at Knowledge:Worx, we're confident that both you and our clients will be delighted to deal with her, and we believe this new role will allow her the opportunity to spread her wings further.

With these changes, we've taken the opportunity to adjust and streamline our account manager portfolios, which will affect some of you. This also gives our ladies (sorry, Deon!) the chance to move out of their comfort zones and grow to new levels, and we'll appreciate your understanding while hand-overs are in progress. However, since we work as a team, don't be shy to speak to any of us if you need our attention.

Congratulations to Bobby van der Merwe and her new husband! The two tied the knot earlier this month. We wish both of you a long and love-filled journey together. Don't forget to appreciate each other every day!



Congratulations to Esre Etsebeth, who became a grandma (again) on 27th September. We know your little bundle has been long awaited, and well loved before he showed his face, and we wish you many, many happy hours rediscovering your inner child with him. Ag man, look at that little noonoo! And the baby is pretty gorgeous too...!



A birdie tells us that congratulations are also due to Sudha Krishnamoorthy, who is expecting a new addition to her family early next year. Enjoy this precursor to a whole new chapter on your life, Sudha!

We welcome Hilda Cronje, UI Designer, who joined syncwize in July. It's been a while since July, Hilda, but we hope you've found a home with us, and look forward to journeying with you as your career progresses.



We'd also like to shout a hearty 'WELCOME BACK' to Esre Etsebeth, senior project and programme manager, who has long been affiliated with our companies but has just returned to syncwize after on a multi-year engagement with our sister company, Knowledge:Worx. Although you never really left, Esre, it's a pleasure having you back on our team.



changes in IT spell new opportunities

It has been long in the coming, and is by now no surprise, yet the size and reach of the digital wave is still astonishing. Stand-out digital experiences and the imperative of getting to market first are becoming key to maintaining a competitive edge in almost all industries.

Companies across the spectrum are now scrambling to leap on the Mobile and Cloud bandwagons before they're left behind, and this is set to have far-reaching implications for the South African labour market.

Moving to business models with a Mobile face has implications across the enterprise. Not only has there been a huge change in the demand for 'techies' in the sense of developers, architects, IT security experts, systems integrators, infrastructure experts and related, but the entire value chain is disrupted. Business analysts now need to have a far more innovative mindset and skills in user experience design. Interestingly, we've experienced a growth curve as we begin to change our sourcing approach to

include marketing and graphic design specialists in our scope.

Companies are looking for multi-skilled developers, as well as for design, process discipline and business acumen. While the shift to Java is already obvious, developers that understand how to use analytics tools are also in demand, as are those that know how to build with scale out principles.

The traditional waterfall approach to software delivery is being overturned, with far more rapid processes focused on fastest possible delivery to market. This too, has a knock-on effect on the types of delivery management skills required. Beyond this, of course, is the necessary change in customer-facing activities. And further, this changes the nature of companies' engagements with their vendors—and, by implication, vendors themselves need to recalibrate.

Not only this, but companies need to adjust their business models and hence organisational strategy to support the faster deci-

sion-making and speedy reaction to their target markets' whims.

Herein, as always, lies opportunity. Now, more than ever, the ability to deliver, coupled with key knowledge and skills is a critical ingredient in sustained business success. And—even more so in South Africa—finding the right combination of talent is a tall task.

Those with skills and knowledge in this new world are in short supply and already highly sought after, with the implication that clients are at the same time desperate to retain skills through attractive permanent offers, and increasingly willing to hire independent contractors, although there is also heightened concern for the perceived risk that contractors may be too eager to move on. So while companies are extremely cost-conscious currently, being cheap and filling key knowledge roles with any 'body' is clearly not the path to success.

It'll be worth your while to make an effort to keep your knowledge and skills up to date!

simplify... and find a little peace

It's a hectic world; prioritising your own peace of mind is more important than ever. If you feel you don't have time for it, perhaps some small but smart changes will make a big difference.

Set limits. If your life is overfilled with stuff you may need to set some limits. Consider ceasing doing unimportant things that suck up your time. A simple example: limit your visits to social media.

Find a relaxation technique that works for you. Breathing with awareness or working out can release tension and recharge you during the day. If you have 15 or 20 minutes, try meditating—there are tons of YouTube guided meditations or meditation music. Or try walking in nature, music, yoga or swimming.

Don't make mountains out of molehills. Not everything is worth the drama. When facing what looks like a mountain, ask yourself: will this matter in 2 years? Try zoom-

ing out and you'll find that in most cases things aren't really that bad.

Slow down. Your emotions work backwards too. Slowing down your movements or speech automatically ratchets down your stress levels.

Declutter. Take 5 minutes to declutter your environment. A simplified and ordered space brings clarity and order to the mind.

Remind yourself to accept and let go. Now is now. But if something negative from the past – something someone said or did – is still in your mind, give it conscious attention instead of pushing it away. When it's there, when you accept that it is, then it starts to lose power. The facts may still be there in your head but the negative feelings are much less powerful. At this point, let go of the 'issue' like you're throwing out a bag of old clothes. Then direct your focus to the present moment and something better instead.

Escape for a while.

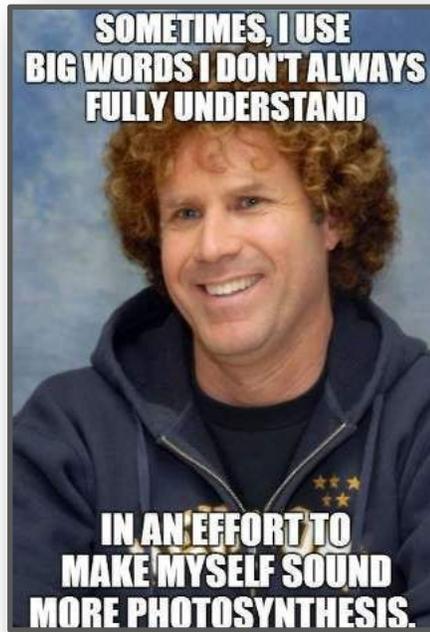


Read a novel, watch your favourite TV-show or a movie and take your mind off your worries. It's simple but it works well to just release pressure and relax.

Just do it. Don't procrastinate anymore. Solve the problem and release it and all the underlying stress it's creating. You probably already know what to do, you're just avoiding it. But the longer you wait the worse your inner tension becomes. So get up from your chair and get started on doing it now.

Breathe. When stressed, lost in a problem or the past or future in your mind, breathe with your belly for two minutes and just focus on the air going in and out. This will calm your body down and bring your mind back into the present moment again.....

Adapted from a blog by Henrik Edberg on www.positivityblog.com



**Wow, winter passed swiftly! The promise of summer is already in the air, and we hope the lively vibes of spring have found their way into your lives. Hope you're living life in full colour!
the syncwize team**



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This newsletter is intended for syncwize's contractor team, and is published quarterly as a means of conveying general information. We would love it if you'd like to contribute, place an advertisement, or have a specific request for inclusion. If so, please contact Pascalina or Helen.